

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as indicated below:

- [c1] (previously presented): A method of removing particulate solids from an oil based drilling or completion fluid, wherein the fluid comprises a water-in-oil emulsion, the method comprising:
exposing the fluid to an electric field having a strength lower than that required to coalesce the water droplets of the emulsion to electrically migrate particulate solids suspended therein, and
collecting the migrated particulate solids to remove them from the fluid.
- [c2] (cancelled)
- [c3] (previously presented): A method according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the electric field has a strength less than 100,000 V/m.
- [c4] (previously presented): A method according to claim 3 any one of the previous claims, wherein the strength of the electric field is controlled such that current and voltage remain proportional to each other.
- [c5] (currently amended): A method according to claim 4 any one of the previous claims, wherein the fluid has a plastic viscosity (PV) ~~PV~~ and a yield point (YP) ~~YP~~, and wherein the plastic viscosity (PV) ~~PV~~ and/or the yield point (YP) ~~YP~~ of the fluid are reduced as a result of the collection of the particulate solids.
- [c6] (previously presented): A method according to claim 1 any one of the previous claims, wherein the fluid contains suspended particulate solids include clay particles.
- [c7] (previously presented): A method according to claim 1 any one of the previous claims, wherein the fluid contains suspended particulate solids include weighting agent particles.
- [c8] (previously presented): A method according to claim 1 any one of the previous claims, wherein the particulate solids in the fluid exposed to the electric field occupy at least 5 vol. % of the total fluid.

- [c9] (previously presented): A method according to claim 8 any one of the previous claims, wherein the fluid exposed to the electric field is a shear-thinning fluid which forms a gel when quiescent.
- [c10] (previously presented): A method according to claim 1 any one of the previous claims, further comprising:
heating the fluid to enhance the collection of particulate solids.
- [c11] (currently amended): A method of recycling an oil based drilling or completion fluid by performing the method of any one of the previous claims comprising:
exposing the fluid to an electric field having a strength lower than that required to coalesce the water droplets of the fluid to electrically migrate particulate solids suspended therein;
collecting the migrated particulate solids to remove them from the fluid; and
using a centrifuge or hydrocyclone to remove other particulate solids from the fluid.
- [c12] (cancelled)
- [c13] (original): A method according to claim 1, including the step of using at least two electrodes to generate the electric field.
- [c14] (original): A method according to claim 1, including the step of using at least two electrodes to generate the electric field and a deposit removal system co-located with the electrodes.
- [c15] (original): A method according to claim 14, wherein deposit removal system is operated continuously or as a batch process.
- [c16] (cancelled)
- [c17] (previously presented): A method according to claim 1, wherein the fluid exposed to the electric field is a shear-thinning fluid which forms a gel when quiescent.
- [c18] (previously presented): A method according to claim 11, further comprising:
heating the fluid to enhance the collection of particulate solids.
- [c19] (previously presented): A method according to claim 18, wherein the particulate solids in the fluid exposed to the electric field occupy at least 5 vol. % of the total fluid.

- [c20] (previously presented): A method according to claim 19, wherein the fluid exposed to the electric field is a shear-thinning fluid which forms a gel when quiescent.
- [c21] (previously presented): A method according to claim 19, wherein the strength of the electric field is less than 100,000 V/m.
- [c22] (previously presented): A method according to claim 21, wherein the strength of the electric field is controlled such that current and voltage remain proportional to each other.
- [c23] (currently amended): A method according to claim 22, wherein the fluid has a plastic viscosity (PV) ~~PV~~ and a yield point (YP) ~~YP~~, the plastic viscosity (PV)~~PV~~ and/or the yield point (YP) ~~YP~~ being reduced as a result of the collection of the particulate solids.